REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 22-23 have been cancelled. Therefore, on entering this amendment claims 1-21 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claims 1-6, 9-13, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Delavaux et al. (EP Patent No. 0684709).

Claims 7-8, 14-15, and 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Delavaux.

Claims 19-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshimura (U.S. Patent No. 5,793,917) in view of Delavaux.

The Applicants traverse the rejections and request reconsideration

Amended claims 1 and 9 highlight clearly that dispersion compensation is carried out on a group of channels forming a wavelength band which travels along one specific optical path. Support for the amendments may be found in the description as originally filed page 2, lines 17-30; page 3, lines 17-26; page 7 lines 6-12 and lines 20-27.

Claims 1 and 9 (as amended) are directed respectively to a method and a device for dispersion compensation wherein said dispersion compensation is applied to an optical path carrying a wavelength band. The wavelength band is described to include a "plurality of channels." Therefore, the dispersion compensation is performed on a plurality of channels, which are within one and the same optical path.

Delavaux (EP-A-0684709) discloses an optical communication system with adjustable compensation. The relevant references in Delavaux to performing dispersion compensation to a plurality of channels is found on column 5 lines, 6-23. Nevertheless, as described in particular in

the passage between lines 9 and 23, individual wavelengths (or channels) are directed toward individual paths for performing dispersion compensation on each channel. It is noted that in relation to the embodiment of figure 7, Delavaux states that "there is a switch 71 that switches the incoming signal to dispersion compensation unit 105, 107, or 109 depending upon the appropriate wavelength" (emphasize added). Likewise in the embodiment of figure 8, Delavaux states that "there is a multiplexer/demultiplexer 81 which directs signals of different wavelength to different dispersion compensation units 105, 107 and 109. Each unit compensates for the wavelength that it receives" (emphasize added). Delavaux has no reference to carrying a plurality of channels, forming a wavelength band, for dispersion compensation through an individual path.

Therefore claims 1 and 9 (as amended) are novel over the cited prior art document.

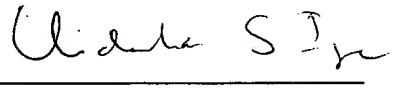
No other document of the prior art appear to propose the solution of performing dispersion compensation on a group of channels carried through a single optical path, therefore no combination of teachings of these documents with Delavaux seems to be possible in order to arrive to the solution proposed by the present invention

Dependent claims 2-8 and 10-21 are also considered to be patentable at least by virtue of their dependence on allowable claims 1 and 9.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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